

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A input generating device comprising:
a core, a flexible track slidably engaged with the core, whereby a first input is generated by sliding movement of the flexible track relative to the core.
2. An input generating device as recited in claim 1 further comprising a first input detection means for detecting the first input generated by sliding movement of the flexible track.
3. An input generating device as recited in claim 2 wherein said input detection means is a turns encoder which detects sliding movement of the track.
4. An input generating device as recited in claim 1 wherein said core forms a peripheral edge around the entirety thereof, said flexible track being slidably engaged with said peripheral edge for movement in a first direction and an opposite direction.
5. An input generating device as recited in claim 4 wherein a channel is formed in said peripheral edge, said flexible track being slidably engaged within said channel.
6. An input generating device as recited in claim 5 wherein said rigid core is of a planar semi circular shape.
7. An input generating device as recited in claim 4 wherein said flexible track is a single flexible piece, extending around said peripheral edge.
8. An input generating device as recited in claim 1 wherein said flexible track comprises a plurality of track segments attached to each other in series.

9. An input generating device as recited in claim 1, wherein said input generating device further comprises a depressible component, whereby a second input is generated by depression of said depressible component.
10. An input generating device as recited in claim 9 further comprising a second input detection means for detecting the second input.
11. An input generating device as recited in claim 10 wherein said second input detection means is a tactile contact switch, which detects an input when the depressible component is depressed.
12. A input generating device as recited in claim 11 wherein said tactile contact switch provides a click like tactile feedback to the user when depressed.
13. An input generating device as recited in claim 11 wherein said core is mounted in sliding engagement with a carriage, said depressible component being positioned such that urging the core to slide along the carriage, causes the core to engage and depress the depressible component, and activate the tactile contact switch.
14. An input generating device for use in a hand held electronic device having a housing, said input generating device comprising:
a core mounted within said housing, a flexible track slidably engaged with the core, whereby a first input is generated by sliding movement of the flexible track relative to the core, a portion of the core and track protruding outside said housing allowing access thereto by the user, the input generating device including a first input detection component for receiving said first input generated by sliding movement of the track.
15. An input generating device as recited in claim 14 wherein said first input detection component is a turns encoder, which senses sliding movement of the track relative to the core.

16. An input generating device as recited in claim 14 further comprising:
a depressible component, depressibly mounted to the housing, generating a second input when said depressible component is depressed; and
a second input detection component for detecting said second input.
17. An input generating device as recited in claim 16 wherein said depressible component is a spring loaded button, and said second input detection component is a tactile contact switch.
18. An input generating device as recited in claim 17 wherein said core is mounted in sliding engagement with a carriage, said depressible component being positioned such that urging the core to slide along the carriage, causes the core to engage and depress the spring loaded button and activate the tactile contact switch.
19. An input generating device as recited in claim 18 wherein said core is formed in a planar and semicircular shape, forming a peripheral edge extending around said core, said track slidably engaged with said peripheral side edge, a curved portion of said peripheral edge extending outwardly from said housing.
20. An input generating device as recited in claim 16 wherein said hand held electronic device, comprises a display screen, said first and second input detection means being coupled to the display screen by a processor, said first and second inputs directing a navigational function and selection function on said display screen, respectively.